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ENG 4752-001: Contemporary American drama

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English 4752: Contemporary American Drama

Instructor: Dr. David Radavich
Office: 3785 Coleman Hall
Telephone: 581-6971 (Office) or 345-9280 (Home)
Office Hours: 10:00-11:00 WF; 14:00-15:00 MW; and by appointment

Required Text:

Jacobus, Lee A., ed., *The Bedford Introduction to Drama*, 5th Edition
Kennedy, Adrienne, *The Adrienne Kennedy Reader*

PURPOSE. This course will mostly focus on American drama over the last quarter century, beginning with Adrienne Kennedy's shattering *Funnyhouse of a Negro* (1964) and ending with Nilo Cruz' *Anna in the Tropics*, which won the Pulitzer Prize in 2003. This period of American theatre is particularly rich in treatments of race, gender, identity, and sexuality, represented by an unusually broad spectrum of writers from different racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds. We will explore these texts with the aid, where possible, of film adaptation and through reading passages together in class. The plays we read will provide a fascinating window into the changing nature of American life and culture as the millennium neared and passed.

ASSIGNMENTS. You will be required to write one shorter paper of approximately 4-6 pages, a prospectus, and one longer, documented paper of some 8-10 pages. Short in-class responses to the readings will be assigned. Students will participate in reading scenes aloud (or performing) and will give a short oral presentation (ca. 5-10 minutes) summarizing the documented paper for the class. There will be a midterm and a final exam.

GRADING. 25% of the course grade will be determined by active participation in class discussion, which includes in-class responses and oral presentations. The shorter paper will count 10%, the midterm 15%, the prospectus 5%, the documented paper 20%, and the final exam 25%.

LATE WORK. Assignments turned in late will be penalized one-third grade PER CALENDAR DAY late. Missed in-class work cannot be made up.

ATTENDANCE POLICY. You are assumed to be professionals-in-training and are expected to attend class regularly as you would show up for work on the job. You will not be penalized for missing up to a week of class. Thereafter, the course grade will be lowered proportionately for each week missed. If you are absent more than four weeks of class, you will automatically receive an F in the course.

PLAGIARISM. According to University policy,

Any teacher who discovers an act of plagiarism - "The appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, and/or thoughts of another author, and representation of them as one's original work" (*Random House Dictionary of the English Language*) - has the right and the responsibility to impose upon the guilty student an appropriate penalty, up to and including immediate assignment of a grade of **F** for the course.

CONFERENCES. I encourage you to drop by and confer with me at any mutually convenient time regarding assignments, problems, or ideas for papers or presentations.

INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES. If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, please contact the Coordinator of the Office of Disability Services (581-6583) as soon as possible.

English 4752 Assignments

- Jan. 7 - Introduction
9 - Adrienne Kennedy, *Funny House of a Negro*
- Jan. 14 - Sam Shepard, *True West*, Act I
16 - *True West*, Act II
- Jan. 21 - No class; ML King Day
23 - David Mamet, *Glengarry Glen Ross*, Act I
- Jan. 28 - *Glengarry Glen Ross*, Act II
30 - August Wilson, *Fences*, Act I
- Feb. 4 - *Fences*, Act II
6 - **Essay #1 due**
- Feb. 11 - David Henry Hwang, *M. Butterfly*, Act I
13 - *M. Butterfly*, Acts II-III
- Feb. 18 - Tony Kushner, *Angels in America*, Act I
20 - *Angels in America*, Act II
- Feb. 25 - *Angels in America*, Act III; review
27 - MIDTERM EXAM
- Mar. 3 - Adrienne Kennedy, *The Ohio State Murders*
5 - Adrienne Kennedy, *Letter to My Students*
- Mar. 10-14 - No class; Spring Break
- Mar. 17- Paula Vogel, *How I Learned to Drive*, first half
19 - *How I Learned to Drive*, second half
- Mar. 24 - Review and discussion
26 - **Prospectus Due**

Mar. 31- Edward Albee, *The Goat*, Act I
Apr. 2 - *The Goat*, Act II

Apr. 7 - Nilo Cruz, *Anna in the Tropics*, Act I
9 - *Anna in the Tropics*, Act II

Apr. 14 - **Documented Essay Due**
16 - Presentations

Apr. 21 - Presentations
23 - Review and evaluation